



THE EFFECT OF BRAND IMAGE AND CELEBRITY ENDORSERS' CREDIBILITY ON PURCHASE INTENTION

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Abstract

The purpose of this research is to discuss whether consumers will have conformity in the face of brand image and the credibility of celebrity Endorser and affect their purchase intention. Nowadays, herding behavior is quite prevalent. Will consumers have conformity because of brand image and celebrity endorser? Usually people follow other people's decisions, even if they have different ideas. Will you influence your purchase intention because of the brand image? Will the products endorsed by celebrities make you want to buy? Do you have conformity? We will explore this study issue.

Keywords: Brand Image, Celebrity Endorser Credibility, Herding Behavior (Conformity), Purchase Intention

Introduction

This research is to explore whether consumers will have conformity in the face of brand image and the credibility of celebrity Endorser and affect their purchase intention. The main target of many organizations have a powerful brand in a competitive market because it can create a wide range of benefits for the organization, including increased profits, reduced risks, cooperation with other departments and opportunities for brand extension (Hawkins et al., 2004; Assael, 2004; Schiffman & Kanuk, 2010).

A perfect brand image can increase consumers' willingness to buy. Celebrity endorsement is one of the

common methods in today's society. A celebrity endorser credibility refers to any individual who is recognized by the public and uses the recognized representative to pass consumer products that appear in advertisements (McCracken, 1989). Existing research provides a good support. Compared with brands endorsed by low-credibility endorser, high-credibility endorser will have a positive impact on consumers' attitudes towards advertising and brands (Jin & Phua, 2014).

At the individual level, conformity refers to a situation in which an individual follows the behavior of others (Gao et al., 2018; Liu & Yang, 2018; Shantha, 2019). In the area of consumer behavior, changes in consumer purchase intention, product

evaluation, or purchase behavior are defined as conformity (Spiller & Belogolova, 2016; Kang et al., 2019). Usually people will follow the decision of others, even if are thinking is not the same.

This study will use conformity as an intermediary variable to study whether consumers will due to brand image and the celebrity endorser credibility influence their purchase intention

Literature Review

Brand Image

The perception of the brand reflected in the brand imagination in the memory of consumers is defined as the brand image (Keller, 1993). The more advantageous the brand image the more active the approach toward the its property and branded product (Aghekyan-Simonian et al., 2012). Research has found that brand image has strong, unique and beneficial characteristics, which are positively correlated with the willingness to pay for high brand equity and high quality prices (Faircloth et al., 2001; Lassar et al., 1995). The brand image helps distinguish the brand from other competitors and also helps the consumer recognize his/her needs for the brand (Anwar et al., 2011).

Endorsers

Friedman and Friedman (1979) defined as celebrity endorser for individuals who have gained public knowledge in areas other than product category approval. Celebrity endorser credibility has proven to be one of the strategies for successful promotion. Studies have shown that the credibility

of celebrity endorser has an effective impact on product attitudes (Eisend & Langner, 2010; Kahle & Homer, 1985), perceptions of performance, financial risk and purchase intentions (Biswas et al., 2006). Consumers' attention can be attracted by celebrities (Buttle et al., 2000; Dean & Biswas, 2001), increase awareness (Kelting & Rice, 2013), increase the affinity of consumers to affiliated brands (Erdogan, 1999; Miciak & Shanklin, 1994), change the brand image (Erdogan, 1999; Goldsmith et al., 2000), and even promote purchase intentions of consumers (Carrillat et al., 2013). Since the positive image of celebrity can be transformed into a brand image, the use of celebrity endorser in advertisements can be more effective than standard promotions to attract the audience's attention (Buttle et al., 2000).

Celebrity Endorser Credibility

Existing research provides a good support. Compared with brands endorsed by low-credibility endorser, high-credibility endorser will have a positive impact on consumers' attitudes towards advertising and brands (Jin & Phua, 2014). Ohanian (1990) comprehensives earlier literature about source effects and put forward three components of celebrity endorser credibility: attractiveness, expertise and trustworthiness.

1. Attractiveness: According to Erdogan (1999), attraction is interpreted as the traditional impression of a positive association of a person and not only includes other characteristics but also physical attractiveness such as athletic ability and personality. Attractive endorsers have a greater impact on consumers than little attractive endors-

ers (Kahle & Homer, 1985; Joseph, 1982).

2. Expertise: Expertise dimension is also referred to as "competence" (Whitehead, 1968), "authoritativeness" (McCroskey, 1966), or "expertness" (Applbaum & Anatol, 1972). For advertisements promoting expensive and useful products, expertise seems to be the most influential source effect (Erdogan et al., 2001).

3. Trustworthiness: Ohanian (1990) pointed out that a trusted communicator is persuasive whether he is an expert or not. The integrity, honesty and credibility possessed by the endorser can be defined as trustworthiness (Van Der Waladt et al., 2009).

Herding Behavior (Conformity)

Usually, people follow others' actions or decisions. This kind of scene is called conformity (Banerjee, 1992). It is widely believed that people tend to imitate each other, resulting in conformity (Chen, 2008). An example of conformity is that consumers often use others as part of its evaluation of the product quality indicators (Park & Lesig, 1977). In particular, when consumers do not have enough information, because it is safer to follow the decisions of others, they are more likely to refer to the actions or suggestions of others (Asch, 1956; Banerjee, 1992). Deutsch and Gerard (1955) indicated that there are two influences derived from others, called normative influence and informational influence.

1. The Effect of Normative: The influence that meets the positive expectations of others is defined as

the normative effect (Deutsch & Gerard, 1955).

2. Informational Influence: Information influence is defined to receive information obtained from others as evidence of the reality of the people as a specific degree (Deutsch & Gerard, 1955). The goal of information impact is to provide an accurate description of the situation and then take the corresponding action. Individuals can use this information to facilitate environmental treatment or solve problems (Lee et al., 2011). For example, review information and the proposal for an online product (e.g. star ratings, sales volume, & customers' reviews) can influence consumer decisions (Chen, 2008).

Purchase Intention

Consumers' preference for purchasing products or services is called purchase intention. In other sentence, purchase intention has another aspect, even if consumers will only purchase products after evaluation. The purchase intention of consumers to choose products is affected by many factors, of which external factors are relatively large, and the final decision depends on the wishes of consumers (Keller, 2001). Study why consumers' decision to buy a particular brand is a purchase intention (Shah et al., 2012). The possibility of consumers buying in the future is defined as purchase intention. Since it is expressed as the willingness of customers to commit to certain activities related to future consumption, many studies use purchase intention to estimate the future benefits of the brand.

Hypothesis 1. Brand image has a positive impact on herding behavior.

The perception of the brand reflected in the brand imagination in the memory of consumers is defined as the brand image (Keller, 1993). The more advantageous the brand image the more active the approach toward the its property and branded product (Aghekyan-Simonian et al., 2012). An example of conformity is that consumers often use others as part of its evaluation of the product quality indicators (Park & Lessig, 1977).

Hypothesis 2a. Attractiveness has a positive impact on herding behavior

Attractive endorsers have a greater impact on consumers than less attractive endorsers (Kahle & Homer, 1985; Joseph, 1982). An example of conformity is that consumers often use others as part of its evaluation of the product quality indicators (Park & Lessig, 1977). In particular, when consumers do not have enough information, because it is safer to follow the decisions of others, they are more likely to refer to the actions or suggestions of others (Asch, 1956; Banerjee, 1992).

Hypothesis 2b. Expertise has a positive impact on herding behavior

For advertisements promoting expensive and useful products, expertise seems to be the most influential source effect (Erdogan et al., 2001). In particular, when consumers do not have enough information, because it is safer to follow the decisions of others, they are more likely to refer to the actions or suggestions of others (Asch, 1956; Banerjee, 1992).

Hypothesis 2c. Trustworthiness has a positive impact on herding behavior

The integrity, honesty and credibility possessed by the endorser can be defined as trustworthiness (Van Der Waldt et al., 2009). People are accustomed to believing what most people believe (Deutsch & Gerard, 1955), and firmly that others have better information than themselves (Bonabeau, 2004). Usually, people follow others' actions or decisions. This kind of scene is called conformity (Banerjee, 1992).

Hypothesis 3. Herding behavior has a positive impact on purchase intention

In the area of consumer behavior, changes in consumer purchase intention, product evaluation, or purchase behavior are defined as conformity (Spiller & Belogolova, 2016; Kang et al., 2019). In particular, when consumers do not have enough information, because it is safer to follow the decisions of others, they are more likely to refer to the actions or suggestions of others (Asch, 1956; Banerjee, 1992). The purchase intention of consumers to choose products is affected by many factors, of which external factors are relatively large, and the final decision depends on the wishes of consumers (Keller, 2001).

Sampling

The five key steps in sampling are definitions of population, sample frame, sampling design, sample size and sampling process (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016). In this study, students from colleges and universities are the sample. The survey was conducted from Mar 15 to Apr 15, 2021. Of the 250 respondents, 40% (250) were male, 60% (250)

were female. The respondents' age groups were: Under 20 years old (40.4%, 101), 21-25 years old (56.4%, 141), 26-30 years old (2.4%, 6), 31-35 years old (0.4%, 1), and more than 56 years old (0.4%, 1). For education, the results showed that 1.2% (3) were high school graduates, 90.8% (227) were college graduates, 7.6% (19) had a master, 0.4% (1) had a Ph.D. graduates.

Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA)

The rule for identifying critical factor loadings is the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Sampling Adequacy (MSA) metric (KMO), which is 0.879, which exceeds the acceptable limit of 0.8 (Kaiser & Rice, 1974). This Bartlett's sphericity test yields an approximate chi-square value of 10134.791 with 1485 degrees of freedom ($p=0.000$). This shows that statistical data is suitable for factor analysis.

Convergence validity is a sub-construction validity, which means that a particular construct is actually measuring that construct. The effectiveness of the convergence is confirmed by the factor loading results of EFA. The survey sample size is 250, and the factor loading ranges from 0.542 to 0.849.

The 7 factors adopted in EFA are called: Brand Image, Celebrity Endorser Credibility, Attractiveness, Expertise, Trustworthiness, Herd Behavior, Purchase Intention. These 7 factors can understand that the sum has a variance of 22.353%.

Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA)

One derives a 7-factor solution and loads more than 27 items with a conservative cut-off level of 0.5 (Hair Jr., et al., 2016). Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of the sampling adequacy (MSA) metric of the measuring scales was 0.940, which is better than satisfactory threshold of 0.8 (Kaiser & Rice, 1974). The Bartlett's Test of Sphericity reported an approximate Chi-Square value of 5918.748 with 378 degrees of freedom ($p=0.000$). From the Rotated Matrix Component Table produced, CFA reached the expected result of loading the scale of 7 dimensions, the loading range of factors is 0.667 to 0.852, which clearly shows the degree of convergence and good discrimination, and all variables are only loaded on one factor. The 7 factors adopted in CFA are called: Brand Image, Celebrity Endorser Credibility, Attractiveness, Expertise, Trustworthiness, Herd Behavior, Purchase Intention. These 7 factors can understand that the sum has a variance of 21.297%.

Reliability and Validity

According to this study, the Cronbach's α values obtained for each of the seven factors ranged from 0.812 to 0.956. Most Cronbach's α values greater than 0.7 (Hair Jr. et al. 2016) can explain the high internal consistency. To make it more effective to check the convergence of the metric, the underlying construction of AVE (Average Variance Extraction) is calculated by using a formula cited by Hair Jr. et al. (2016). It can be seen that the AVE value of all structures is greater than 0.5 (Hair Jr. et al., 2016) and the CR (composite reliability) value is greater than 0.7 (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). It can be obtained that

the degree of convergence of the measure is valid.

Correlations

The final conclusion shows the product spokesperson and brand image (respectively $r = 0.407$, $p < 0.01$). Celebrity Endorser Credibility Expertise and Brand Image are significantly correlated with Celebrity Endorser Credibility Attractiveness ($r = .402$, $p < 0.01$; $r = .428$, $p < 0.01$). Celebrity Endorser Credibility Trustworthiness was significantly correlated with Brand Image, Celebrity Endorser Credibility Attractiveness and Celebrity Endorser Credibility Expertise ($r = .312$, $p < 0.01$; $r = .508$, $p < 0.01$; $r = .660$, $p < 0.01$). Herd Behavior and Brand Image are significantly correlated with the three Celebrity Endorser Credibility, (Attractiveness, Expertise, Trustworthiness) (respectively $r = .178$, $p < 0.01$; $r = .349$, $p < 0.01$; $r = .567$, $p < 0.01$; $r = .696$, $p < 0.01$; $r = .842$, $p < 0.01$). Purchase Intention and Brand Image are significantly correlated with the three Celebrity Endorser Credibility (Attractiveness, Expertise, Trustworthiness) and Herd Behavior (respectively $r = .324$, $p < 0.01$; $r = .472$, $p < 0.01$; $r = .672$, $p < 0.01$; $r = .720$, $p < 0.01$; $r = .833$, $p < 0.01$). The results of these correlations support the assumptions in the test model.

Model Fit

The results are presented, assuming that the model fits the data perfectly and the overall fit perfectly. The chi-square/degree-of-freedom ratio is 1.708, which is within a reasonable level of 2.00 to 3.00, which is appropriate. Chi-square goodness of fit is considered worthy of attention ($\chi^2 =$

1093.184, $df = 640$, $p = 0.000$), but all fitted SEM measurements show good fit statistics. All goodness of fit within an appropriate range Index: Goodness of Fit Index (GFI) = 0.856, Adjusted Goodness of Fit Index (AGFI) = .826, Root Mean Square Residual (RMR) = .037, Comparative Fit Index (CFI) = .944, normalized Fitting Index (NFI) = .894, Incremental Fitting Index (IFI) = .944, and the root mean square error is approximate (RMSEA) = .064. Overall, the fit statistics show that the model fits the data perfectly.

Final SEM Model

- H1: The Effect of Brand Image → Herd Behavior, Estimate = .014; S.E. = .068; C.R. = .203
- H2a: Attractiveness → Herd Behavior, Estimate = .331; S.E. = .014; C.R. = 2.365
- H2b: Expertise → Herd Behavior, Estimate = .024; S.E. = .046; C.R. = .536
- H2c: Trustworthy → Herd Behavior, Estimate = 1.108; S.E. = .155; C.R. = 7.138 (Sig.***)
- H3: Herd Behavior → Purchase Intention, Estimate = 1.128; S.E. = .085; C.R. = 13.206 (Sig.***)

Conclusion

Discussion

This study uses validity to provide supplementary support for the hypothesis and to contribute to corporate social media marketing. Trustworthi-

ness has a positive impact on herding behavior is significantly related. The trust model in communication is the listener's confidence and acceptance of the information and speaker (Abdulmajid-Sallam & Wahid, 2012). Ohanian (1990) pointed out that a trusted communicator is persuasive whether he is an expert or not. The integrity, honesty and credibility possessed by the endorser can be defined as trustworthiness (Van Der Waladt et al., 2009). People are accustomed to believing what most people believe (Deutsch & Gerard, 1955), and firmly that others have better information than themselves (Bonabeau, 2004). Usually, people follow others' actions or decisions. This kind of scene is called conformity (Banerjee, 1992). In the area of consumer behavior, changes in consumer purchase intention, product evaluation, or purchase behavior are defined as conformity (Spiller & Belogolova, 2016; Kang et al., 2019). The higher the trustworthiness, the more herding behavior will occur. The proof presented in this study shows that there is a significant positive correlation between the two.

The results of another study proved that herding behavior can affect purchase intention. In the area of consumer behavior, changes in consumer purchase intention, product evaluation, or purchase behavior are defined as conformity (Spiller & Belogolova, 2016; Kang et al., 2019). An example of conformity is that consumers often use others as part of its evaluation of the product quality indicators (Park & Lessig, 1977). In particular, when consumers do not have enough information, because it is safer to follow the decisions of others, they are more likely to refer to the actions or sugges-

tions of others (Asch, 1956; Banerjee, 1992). The purchase intention of consumers to choose products is affected by many factors, of which external factors are relatively large, and the final decision depends on the wishes of consumers (Keller, 2001). The higher the degree of herding behavior, the more it will affect the purchase intention. The proof presented in this study shows that there will be a significant positive correlation between the two.

Managerial Implications

This research can provide some empirical enlightenment for companies in social media marketing. Considering whether the brand image and the credibility of the endorser used are appropriate, it is one of the main reasons why consumers will have herd behavior, which will affect their purchase intention. The results of this study confirm that endorser trustworthiness is closely related to whether consumers will have herd behavior.

Ohanian (1990) pointed out that a trusted communicator is persuasive whether he is an expert or not. The integrity, honesty and credibility possessed by the endorser can be defined as trustworthiness (Van Der Waladt et al., 2009). Use endorser with trustworthiness to endorse its products, prompting consumers to have a sense of trust in the product, and then causing consumers to have herd behavior. People are accustomed to believing what most people believe (Deutsch & Gerard, 1955), and firmly that others have better information than themselves (Bonabeau, 2004). Usually, people follow others' actions or decisions. This kind of scene is called conformity (Banerjee, 1992). In the area of con-

sumer behavior, changes in consumer purchase intention, product evaluation, or purchase behavior are defined as conformity (Spiller & Belogolova, 2016; Kang et al., 2019).

Through conformity, more consumers will be aware of the product and at the same time increase the product's exposure. According to the results of this study, it is confirmed that herd behavior has a positive impact on whether consumers will have a purchase intention. Companies may ignore the influence of herd behavior on consumers' purchasing intentions. An example of conformity is that consumers often use others as part of its evaluation of the product quality indicators (Park & Lessig, 1977). In particular, when consumers do not have enough information, because it is safer to follow the decisions of others, they are more likely to refer to the actions or suggestions of others (Asch, 1956; Banerjee, 1992). The purchase intention of consumers to choose products is affected by many factors, of which external factors are relatively large, and the final decision depends on the wishes of consumers (Keller, 2001). Therefore, before conducting social media marketing, companies can first consider the psychological state of consumers' herd behavior, and then design appropriate product advertisements with trustworthiness endorser. To establish a good brand image to enhance consumers' sense of identity and trust in products, services or brands, and generate herd behavior, thereby increasing consumers' willingness to buy.

Limitations and Directions for Future Research

This research emphasizes some research limitations and provides some suggestions for future research. First of all, this study is a cross-sectional design, and the data is also collected at the same time point, so it may cause causal bias. It is suggested that further research can use longitudinal research design to confirm the sequence development of the process and confirm the inference. Longitudinal research is a kind of observational research, through observation of the same subject multiple or years, to investigate what changes have occurred, as well as the reasons and ways of occurrence, especially in the context of social culture (Carduff et al., 2015).

On the other hand, from the perspective of psychology, longitudinal research is the preferred method to measure the influence of the same group of phenomena over time. In this way, researchers can obtain more reliable and abundant data, so as to in-depth study of the causal relationship between brand image, celebrity endorser credibility and other related results found in this research.

Another limitation of this study is that the respondents in this study are relatively young in age and education. In order to prevent age deviations that may affect the experimental results, it is recommended that future studies can investigate the ages of different subjects more evenly range.

Finally, a potential limitation of this study is that it does not focus on the results of measuring brand image and celebrity endorser credibility from the consumer's perspective. Past research shows that Keller (1993) Brand image is defined as a concept assumed

by customers due to personal emotions and subjective factors. The perception of the brand reflected by the brand associations in the memory of consumers is defined as the brand image (Keller, 1993). The more advantageous the brand image the more active the approach toward the its property and branded product (Aghekyan-Simonian et al., 2012). Credibility refers to the celebrity audience to convey honesty, integrity and credibility of the degree of perceived credibility by advertising agency (Tripp et al., 1994). Existing research provides a good support. Compared with brands endorsed by low-credibility endorser, high-credibility endorser will have a positive impact on consumers' attitudes towards advertising and brands (Jin & Phua, 2014). Therefore, it is recommended that future research should consider target customer groups and products to design brand image and celebrity endorser credibility related content, and use appropriate Copywriting and pictures to convey relevant information to achieve the purpose of advertising and marketing.

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